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**REMARKS
BY
U.S. AMBASSADOR TO BANGLADESH DAN MOZENA
UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING AND SOUTH ASIA: TRENDS AND
PROSPECTS
DHAKA UNIVERSITY
AUGUST 24, 2013**

Professor AAMS Arefin Siddique, Vice Chancellor, Dhaka University

M. Shahidul Haque, Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Benazir Ahmed, Commissioner, Dhaka Metropolitan Police

Brigadier General Abu Sayeed Khan, Director General, Operations and Plan Directorate, Armed Forces Division

Professor Ashequa Irshad, Chairperson, Department of International Relations, Dhaka University

... and all of you ... good friends from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, who, like me, treasure the role of the region's peacekeepers in sustaining global peace

Asalaam 'malaikum and good morning.

It was more than a dozen years ago ... 1999 to be exact ...

It was a hot day ... but we didn't care ... we were so proud ... the Bangladesh military leaders were out in force ... then U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh John Holzman was there ... seemingly everyone was there ... I was lost somewhere in the crowd ...

It was an historic day ... it was ribbon cutting day ... it was opening day for Bangladesh's new Peacekeeping Operations Training Center ... we thought the new Center resplendent ... freshly painted training classrooms ... language lab computers all neatly lined up ... America was pleased to be Bangladesh's partner in creating this new facility ... it was a great day.

In March last year I returned to the PKO Training Center now renamed BIPSOT ... I was there to witness the honorable Prime Minister's opening the Shanti Doot III regional PKO training exercise, involving peacekeepers from Bangladesh, from the region and from far beyond,

including trainers from America ... this, too, was a grand day ... I was pleased to participate in the event and doubly pleased that I could announce that America was contributing another \$5 million to further expand the center.

After the ceremony was over, I took a tour of BIPSOT ... I recognized nothing from my visits there a dozen years earlier ... but I was mightily impressed by the massive, beautiful administrative block, the huge dormitories, and the well-developed training facilities.

I kept looking for the place that was the pride of my life in 1999. As the tour ended, I queried my guide; he laughed and exclaimed, "oh ... you mean that little building over there." As my eye followed his fingertip, I then spied the edifice that had once loomed so large in my life, and discovered that it had shrunk over the years and was now simply lost in a corner of the sprawling campus.

That anecdote tells the story of Bangladesh's participation in peace support operations. From 1988, when Bangladesh dispatched its first group of officers to UNIIMOG in the aftermath of the Iran-Iraq war, Bangladesh has become the world's largest contributor of soldiers and policemen and policewomen to peace support operations around the world ... and BIPSOT is now the world's largest PKO training center. Bangladesh has every right to be so proud of this achievement; I know that I am proud that America has been Bangladesh's steadfast partner over all the years, contributing over \$11 million to build classrooms, upgrade dining and barracks facilities, outfit classrooms with computers and other IT infrastructure, and undertake training.

Bangladeshi boots on the ground ... in operations around the world ... have contributed importantly to sustaining peace, and the world community is so deeply grateful, as UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon made clear during his 2011 visit to Bangladesh.

And Bangladesh seeks to do even more ... it is working to expand its peacekeeping capacity to have three PKO battalions on standby at BIPSOT ... and it hopes to increase its PKO troop commitments up to 15,000 annually. These are impressive goals. One of my goals over the next year is to further help Bangladesh by working with the Bangladesh military to procure four more C-130's, that reliable workhorse for air transportation of troops and supplies.

As I look ahead, I think the international community must do more to support troop contributing countries like Bangladesh.

We must ensure that peacekeeping operations have clear, credible and achievable mandates and the resources to succeed.

We must ensure that peacekeepers understand and are properly trained and equipped to take on expanded mandates to protect civilians, prevent sexual and gender-based violence, and build sustainable peace.

This is a tall order, but I never doubt that Bangladesh and the other troop contributing countries represented here will rise to the occasion.

I am pleased that America is co-sponsoring this conference with the Dhaka University Department of International Relations. I think this conference will contribute importantly to bettering, deepening, and broadening understanding of the ever-changing world of peace support operations. I wish you all every success as the conference gets underway.

Thank you.

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**As prepared for delivery.*